

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE IMMEDIATE

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SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL ENTITLED "BELGRADE
STALINISM"

TEXT OF FEBRUARY 25 NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL ENTITLED
"BELGRADE STALINISM" FOLLOWS:

IN THE REALM OF FREEDOM OF IDEAS, AT LEAST, IT IS BECOMING
INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN TODAY'S
BELGRADE TITOISM AND YESTERDAY'S MOSCOW STALINISM. THUS,
THE FAMED YUGOSLAV WRITER, MIHAJLO MIHAJLOV, IS SCHEDULED
TO GO ON TRIAL TODAY FOR ALLEGEDLY SPREADING HOSTILE
PROPAGANDA, A CHARGE FOR WHICH THE MAXIMUM PENALTY IS
DEATH. LAST MONTH EIGHT OUTSTANDING BELGRADE UNIVERSITY
PROFESSORS WERE OUSTED FROM THEIR POSITIONS BY A LEGISLATIVE
DECREE WHICH ACCUSED THEM OF CORRUPTING YOUTHS.

MORE GENERALLY, A CAMPAIGN INTENDED TO TERRORIZE ACTUAL OR
POTENTIAL DISSIDENTS IS IN FULL SWING, ALONG WITH A MASSIVE
PRESS PROPAGANDA OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE UNITED STATES.
AND THESE DEPRESSING EVENTS ARE TAKING PLACE IN A NATION
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WHICH ONCE SEEMED SERIOUSLY BENT ON PROVING THAT MARXIST

ECONOMICS DID NOT NECESSITATE SNUFFING OUT DEMOCRATIC
DIVERSITY OF PUBLICLY EXPRESSED OPINION.

EXPLANATIONS FOR THESE REGRETTABLE RETROGRESSIVE TRENDS
VARY. IT IS NOT UNLIKELY THAT AGED PRESIDENT TITO IS
TRYING TO SMOOTH THE WAY FOR A HANDPICKED SUCCESSOR
BEFORE HIS OWN DEATH. THERE IS UNDOUBTEDLY ALSO FEAR IN
BELGRADE THAT THE COUNTRY'S WORSENING ECONOMIC SITUATION
MAY FAN POLITICAL DISCONTENT, ESPECIALLY AS WORKERS RETURN
FROM JOBS IN WESTERN EUROPE AND CONTRAST THEIR FORMER
PROSPERITY AS "SLAVES OF CAPITALISM" WITH THE REALITY OF
UNEMPLOYMENT IN YUGOSLAVIA.

WHATEVER THE MOTIVATION, THE PRESENT INTERNAL POLITICAL
POLICY OF THE BELGRADE REGIME IS BLACKENING YUGOSLAVIA'S
REPUTATION IN THE WEST. THAT POLICY MUST DELIGHT THOSE
IN THE KREMLIN WHO DREAM OF ONCE AGAIN SEEING A SOVIET
SATELLITE IN YUGOSLAVIA ON THE MODEL THAT EXISTED BEFORE
THE HISTORIC BREAK OF 1948.

END TEXT. KISSINGER

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